



Extension



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2019

First Impressions: Moultonborough



New Hampshire
First Impressions

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Acknowledgements

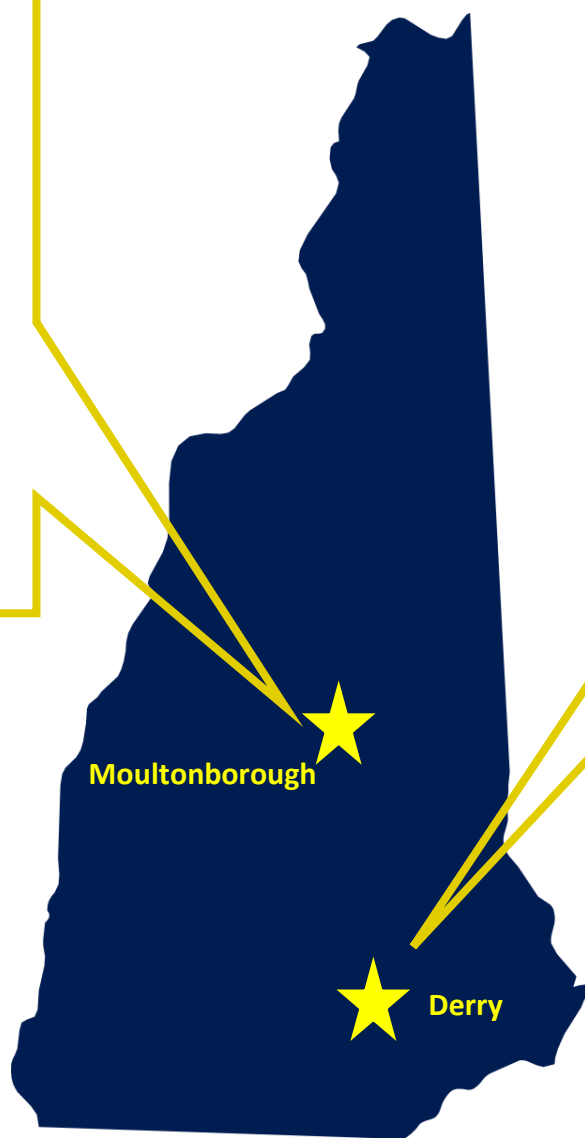
Thank you to the community volunteers who are passionate about improving their communities and provided their time and effort to implement the First Impressions program.

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First Impressions was developed in 1991 by Andy Lewis, University of Wisconsin Extension Associate Professor, and James Schneider, Grant County, Wisconsin Economic Development Director. Since then, the program has been adapted by states across the US, as well as in Canada. The First Impressions program has been adapted by University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension to meet the current and future needs of New Hampshire communities.

Introduction

The look and feel of a downtown can influence the decisions of potential residents, visitors, and businesses. A vibrant downtown serves as a gathering place, a place for people to dine, shop, and conduct business. New Hampshire First Impressions is designed to help a community learn about their downtown's existing assets and opportunities for improvement as seen through the eyes of first time visitors.

Possible outcomes include:

- Improving the visual appearance of a downtown
- Strengthening the marketing and promotion of a downtown
- Enriching the climate of a downtown for new businesses, residents, and visitors

The First Impressions assessment consists of a Pre-Visit Training, a Pre-Visit Survey, a visit to the community to conduct the assessment, and a Post-Visit Survey, and Post-Visit Debrief. During the visit, team members use the following characteristics to conduct the assessment:



Throughout the report, these characteristics are identified as assets and opportunities. Assets are the strengths in the downtown—where characteristics exist and are excellent and well-maintained. For example, a well-maintained trail or a bench in a nice location would be considered assets. Opportunities are those characteristics that exist or do not exist, where there is room for improvement. An example of an opportunity for improvement might be lack of bike lanes, or a broken sidewalk.

New Hampshire First Impressions Process

The New Hampshire First Impressions program matches two NH communities who compile a team of community volunteers to visit and assess each other's community and then report their findings—a “community exchange”.

Derry and Moultonborough began the process of forming diverse and representative First Impressions steering committees in late spring, 2019. Steering Committee members met with UNH Cooperative Extension staff to learn about the First Impressions process, what characteristics are important in a downtown, and how to conduct a downtown assessment. Over the summer they completed a pre-assessment survey, an assessment visit to their partner community, a post-assessment survey and debrief, and a joint community debrief. Data from these efforts were compiled and analyzed by UNH Cooperative Extension staff in order to identify overarching themes in both assets and opportunities and complete a final report.

Pre-Visit Survey

The Pre-Visit Survey was completed online prior to conducting the visit. The survey requires team members to conduct internet research on the community they will be visiting and reflect on the quality and availability of information on webpages and social media. Finally, the survey requires team members to reflect on any perceptions they may have about the community prior to their visit.

First Impressions Assessment Visit

During the First Impressions visit, members of the visiting team utilized a mobile application: Collector for ArcGIS. Collector for ArcGIS is a free mobile application that allows for data collection in the field.

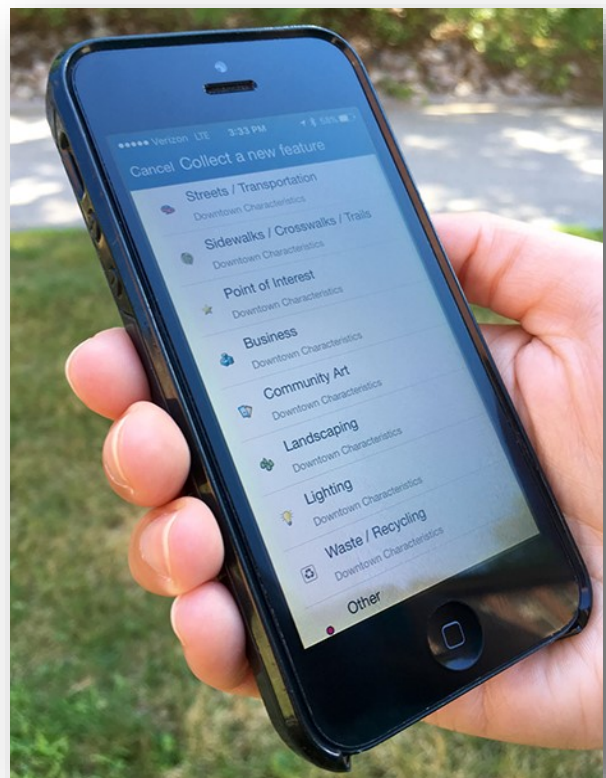
When a team member uses Collector, they select a characteristic from a list, fill out an observation, choose whether the characteristic is an asset, asset/opportunity or opportunity for improvement from a drop down menu, and have the chance to upload a photo or video. Once submitted, the information is stored as a point on a map.

Post-Visit Survey

Following the visit, the visiting team members completed a Post-Visit online survey. This survey allows team members to reflect on their visit and rate the downtown overall. Team members also reflect on their initial perceptions and whether they would like to live, visit or open a business in the community.

Post-Visit Team Debrief

About two weeks after the visit to Moultonborough, the visiting team held a debrief meeting in which visitors reflected on the experience and shared their thoughts. This feedback provided additional context and background information to the Assessment data and Pre- and Post-Visit Surveys.



About Moultonborough

Moultonborough is a community of just over 4,000 residents located in Carroll County, 68 miles from Manchester, 73 miles from Portland, and 118 miles from Boston. Moultonborough is at the northern end of Lake Winnepesaukee and south of the White Mountain National Forest. Moultonborough contains three main state routes, Route 25, Route 109 and Route 171 and is located approximately 19 miles from I-93, the closest interstate highway to the town.

Moultonborough residents trend older than the state and region, with a median age of 53 years and over a quarter of the population over the age of 65. The community is highly educated and has a median household income of \$74,625. Moultonborough's largest private employers are CruCon Cruise, Meredith Village Savings Bank, Penta Corporation, Sabanek, and Miracle Farms Landscaping.

*Data from NH Employment Security

Forming the Moultonborough First Impressions

Steering Committee

Moultonborough and Derry began the process of forming diverse and representative First Impressions steering committees in late spring, 2019. Steering Committee members met with UNH Cooperative Extension staff to learn about the First Impressions process, what characteristics are important for a vibrant downtown or village, and how to conduct a downtown assessment. Over the summer, they completed a pre-assessment survey, an assessment visit to their partner community, a post-assessment survey and debrief, and a joint community debrief. Data from those efforts were compiled and analyzed by UNH Cooperative Extension staff in order to identify overarching asset and opportunity themes and to compile a final report to present to the community. This report will be sharing with the community of Moultonborough at a public forum on October 29th, 2019 and will be made available to the town and general public.



Overview of Moultonborough Village Development

Moultonborough Village, historically known as Moultonboro Corner, has been the focus of a number of Planning studies over the past decade. Recent efforts focus particular attention on the revitalization and non-linear expansion of present-day Moultonborough Village. Compromised by the Route 25 corridor (previously Moultonborough's Main Street) and commercial growth along that corridor, the Village presents special challenges with regard to land use, vitality, and appearance.

Moultonborough's Zoning Ordinance was enacted in 1985 and has undergone numerous revisions, most recently in 2019. A commercial district was approved in 2000, establishing two commercial zones on Route 25 (Commercial Zone A: from the Center Harbor town line to Blake Road; and Commercial Zone B: from Route 109 to the Sandwich town line). In 2007 voters approved a third commercial zone, known as Commercial Zone C: the Village, along the remaining section of Route 25: 'established with the intent of maintaining the character of the Village...which has, through roughly 200 years of development, maintained a consistent character in massing, setback, density, and building type and design'. Problematically, this has resulted in the creation of a continuous commercial zone or strip for the entire length (8.5 miles) of Route 25 (Whittier Highway) as it passes through the town.

From 2014-2015, a representative group of Moultonborough volunteers worked with then Planner Bruce Woodruff to conduct a survey and to compile a comprehensive Village Vision Report for Moultonborough Village, with specific recommendations for attaining that vision. The Village Vision Report incorporated numerous former Planning studies (2006 LRPC Smart Growth Audit, 2008 LRPC Route 25 Corridor Study, 2008 Master Plan Update, 2010 Safe Routes to Schools Travel Plan), as well as recommendations from the 2012 Plan NH Charrette (Moultonborough Village Report). In 2017, a Village Center Overlay District was established, expanding the Village zoning district; Master Plan chapter updates have been adopted 2016-2019. In 2018, a second Plan NH Charrette (Moultonborough Design Charrette) again focused on the Village, providing additional action items.

Planning studies and community input consistently support improving on what already exists in Moultonborough Village, capitalizing on the village's existing rural character and scenic beauty, which include natural, cultural, and historical assets. The UNH First Impressions assessment exercise again recommends leveraging these same assets, by redeveloping vacant or underutilized historic buildings, developing trail networks for connectivity, and improving 'Main Street' for pedestrian use.

Key Findings

Assets identify the strengths in the downtown. The list below provides a summary of the findings and feedback from the assessors.

Local Businesses: Moultonborough Village has a number of attractive local businesses that serve both residents and visitors. This includes The Old Country Store and Museum, a destination for visitors from around the area, as well as Cup & Crumb, Lulu's Wine and Cheese, El Mariachi, the yoga studio, and retail shops.

Parks and Natural Features: There are a number of green spaces and natural areas spread throughout the village area. The green space around the municipal complex, Sutherland Park, and Berry Pond are well-maintained and attractive places to spend time. Additionally, Moultonborough is conveniently located with access to Lake Winnepesaukee and other bodies of water as well as the mountains and hiking, making it a potential outdoor destination.

Public Buildings and Spaces: The village area contains the town hall, library, recreation and community center, and emergency services building. These buildings are visually attractive, complement the village's brand, and are conveniently located. The library has a large selection of books and other resources, a meeting space, and appeared to serve as a hub and gathering place for the community. There was ample parking for residents and visitors to access the public buildings. Additionally, the historic society and museum are also located in the village center and are a draw for both residents and visitors.

Visual Appeal and Landscaping: Moultonborough Village has attractive landscaping at both public buildings and spaces and private businesses. The landscaping throughout the village area created a positive and welcoming environment for visitors and showed the residents and businesses care about their community. The adopt-a-spot program appeared to be successful and complemented the numerous well-landscaped spots throughout the village.

Location: Moultonborough Village is located on a main road that's heavily used by visitors to the area and residents of Moultonborough and surrounding communities. Route 25 provides customers and visitors for existing and future businesses and attractions in Moultonborough Village. The village also has an ideal location at the northern end of Lake Winnepesaukee, a tourism destination, and is surrounded by historic towns and recreation amenities like The Ossipee Mountains.

Key Findings

Opportunities identify areas of high potential for improvement. The list below provides a summary of the findings and feedback from the assessors.

Walkability and Pedestrian Safety: There are barriers to building sidewalks and crosswalks in Moultonborough Village, however walkability and pedestrian safety are the biggest challenges. It's unsafe for residents and visitors to cross the street from businesses like The Old Country Store to Artie's or walk along the road to nearby retail businesses. Improving the walkability of the village would encourage increased spending and visitation to local businesses.

Traffic and Signage: The traffic moving through Moultonborough village is an asset for the town to leverage, but also presents challenges. Cars and trucks drive through the village at high speeds and are unaware of pedestrians. The trucks create noise, making it difficult to leverage parks and green space in the village. Traffic calming measures would increase pedestrian and visitor safety. A clear village entrance and additional signage promoting the village and local businesses would improve driver awareness and encourage cars to stop at Moultonborough's businesses and other attractions.

Business Diversification: There are a number of attractive local businesses like The Old Country Store, the Cup and Crumb, and a yoga studio. However, additional retail shops, a restaurant, a bar, and other businesses would make Moultonborough Village more of a destination. There are a number of vacant buildings and parcels of land that are currently underutilized and can be leveraged as homes for new businesses.

Underutilized Buildings and Spaces: Moultonborough Village has a number of underutilized buildings and spaces that could be leverage for new businesses and community gathering spaces. Two vacant historic buildings (French-Taylor House and Grange Hall), as well as other underused buildings, offer redevelopment opportunities for new businesses and attractions. Green space located throughout the town, specifically that on the municipal complex, could be utilized for community gatherings, seating and picnic tables, and local music.

Berry Pond and Sutherland Park: The park and pond are significant assets located adjacent to the village that can be better leveraged by increasing connections to the municipal complex. The pond is picturesque and offers a number of recreation and leisure opportunities that would improve with some investment. Better signage at the entrance to the park and at the pond boat ramp would draw in additional users. Extending the trails around the park would increase usage. Rebuilding the dock could increase canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and other uses.

Village Brand and Marketing: Moultonborough Village has numerous assets including historic buildings, attractive local businesses, parks and a pond, and an ideal location. The village needs to brand itself as a destination for local residents and visitors. It needs to leverage its location and access to Lake Winnepesaukee, the White Mountains, recreation, and historic and quaint New England towns.

Before the Visit

Pre-Visit Survey

The visiting team completed the Pre-Visit Survey prior to visiting Moultonborough. The survey provided an opportunity to research Moultonborough on the internet and social media and describe perceptions before visiting Moultonborough Village. The results of the survey are as follows:

General Impression

What is your impression of Moultonborough prior to visiting?

- I haven't been to Moultonborough in many years and don't remember visiting. I have mostly passed through on family trips and stopped for a quick lunch.
- I visited Castle in the Clouds over 20 years ago. I remember Moultonborough as a very rural and scenic place.
- It's a pretty town in the Lakes Region at the base of the mountains. Castle in the Clouds is located there.
- I don't know anything about Moultonborough except that Castle in the Clouds is located there.
- Moultonborough is quaint and old and located by the water and the mountains. It's a nice place to make a stop at The Old County Store when traveling to Tamworth or North Conway.
- We visited Castle in the Clouds many years ago. I've driven through it a couple of times since then but never spent any time there.

Internet Research

Steering committee members were asked to use a search engine to search for "Moultonborough, NH" in order to record the websites that most commonly appear. Each committee member recorded the top three websites, which are the following: Trip Advisor, Wikipedia, Mapquest, and various Town of Moultonborough websites.

Committee members were then asked about the usefulness of their internet research in providing information about Moultonborough. They found that Trip Advisor provided some helpful and insightful information on attractions in Moultonborough. They found that many of the useful local websites were located further down on the search results and were more difficult to access. Some committee members thought the town website could be updated and improved to provide more useful information to visitors and potential businesses and residents.

Committee members were then asked to search for "Moultonborough" on the various social media platforms that they use. Moultonborough Police, Moultonborough Academy, and Moultonborough Public Library each had accounts on both Facebook and Instagram. Committee members didn't find that there was a large social media presence promoting local attractions, shops, and businesses.

Desire to Visit

Team members were asked if they would want to visit Moultonborough with family or friends, and to share why or why not. Comments included:

Yes

- Moultonborough's location in the Lakes Region and near the mountains make it attractive to visit.
- The Castle in the Clouds and the lakes make the area a draw.
- I like the area surrounding Moultonborough (Lake Winnepesaukee, Tamworth, Sandwich, Chocorua Village) and the sites (lakes and mountains). I also like the Old Country Store and Cup and Crumb. However, I've never seen a downtown area of Moultonborough and don't know where it is.

No

- Moultonborough seems like a quintessential small NH town to pass through but not to visit as a destination.
- Moultonborough seems really far away for not much of a draw. There weren't any attractions that jumped out at me during my research.

Welcoming

Committee members were also asked if Moultonborough seemed like a welcoming community for people to visit, live, or open a business based on their online research. Comments included:

Yes

- I would visit due to their advertising of Castle in the Clouds, but everything else seems pretty generic.
- I would consider living in the area due to the location near the lakes, mountains, and many nice surrounding towns. The region seems welcoming, but I'm not sure that Moultonborough is playing a large role in that.

Maybe

- The pictures on the internet make it look like an attractive and inviting place to live and visit. There seems to be some homes for sale in the area and it looks like it would be a good place to live. I'm not sure about locating a business there though. There isn't a lot of information on starting a business in Moultonborough or what types of businesses the town would support.

No

- There doesn't seem to be a lot of information on the internet that is inviting people to visit the town.

About the Visit: Team Visit of Moultonborough

The visiting team consisted of eight volunteer assessors. The team visited Moultonborough on August 22nd, 2019. The team arrived in the morning, spent time exploring downtown Moultonborough and had lunch at a local restaurant, and departed in the early afternoon.

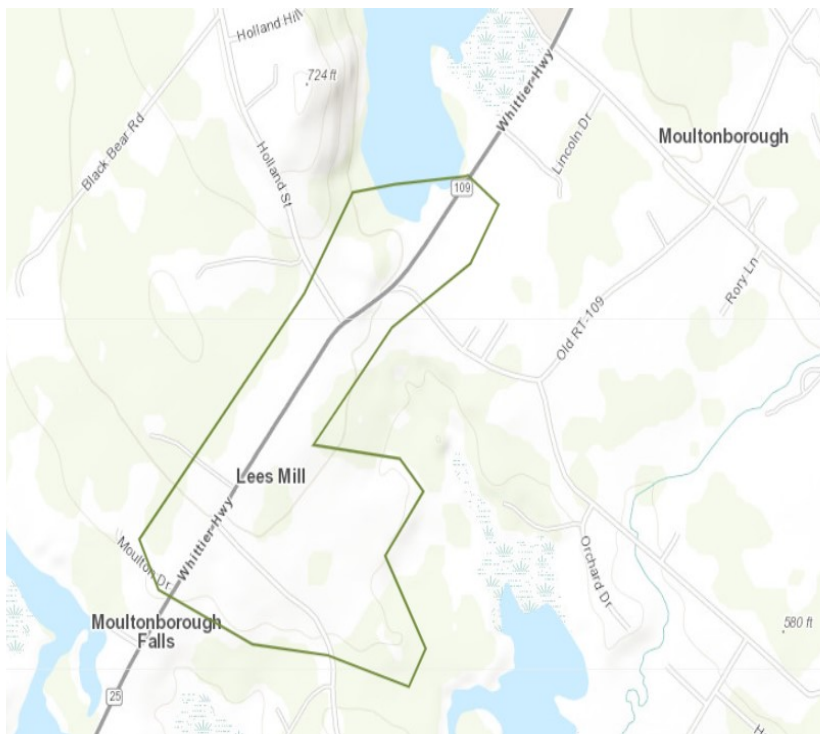
Pre-Visit Training

Prior to the assessment date, participating volunteers met with two UNH Cooperative Extension staff for training on conducting a First Impressions assessment. The volunteers learned about what makes a community vibrant, and reviewed the downtown characteristics that comprise a First Impressions assessment. The volunteers were also instructed on how to complete the assessment using the mobile application.

The Assessment Area

The Town of Moultonborough defined the First Impressions assessment area as shown on Map 1, below.

Map 1. Town of Moultonborough First Impressions Study Area



Findings

The following narrative is representative of data collected through Collector for ArcGIS during the visit, comments from the Post-Visit online survey, and comments during a debrief meeting with the visiting team. All team members utilized the mobile application Collector for ArcGIS.

The data is organized by the downtown characteristics team members identified, and the comments have been coded as assets and opportunities. Assets are the strengths in the downtown—where characteristics exist and are excellent and well-maintained. For example, a well-maintained trail or a bench in a nice location would be considered assets. Opportunities are those characteristics that exist or do not exist, where there is room for improvement. An example of an opportunity for improvement might be lack of bike lanes, or a broken sidewalk.



Assets

Local Businesses: The assessment team commented on the great local businesses that Moultonborough has that meet the needs of residents and visitors, offer great services and products, and are attractive places to spend time. Assessors enjoyed spending time at the Cup and Crumb and The Old Country Store and thought they were great local attractions.

- I love the vibe of the café. It was great inside. Fun, hip, busy. They have delicious food, good services, and the service was quick. It's busy, so seems like there must be demand to support similar businesses in Moultonborough.
- The yoga studio has great classes, full schedule, and something for everyone.
- The wine and cheese shop creates an upscale vibe and could be a tourist destination.
- Moultonborough has the best country store ever. It has tourist info, snacks, books on local towns, a central location, parking, and a place to rest. It's a tourist destination and I could get lost in here for hours.

DATE	TIME	CLASS	INSTRUCTOR
8/17 SATURDAY	8:00 AM	Cycling (JAYAFIT) Sign of India!	KALE
	9:30 AM	All Levels Yoga for Flexibility & Strengthening	KAREN
8/18 SUNDAY	9:30 AM	All Levels Yoga with Crystal Singing Bowls	CHRISTINA
8/19 MONDAY	7:30 AM	Cycle Circuit Fusion (JAYAFIT)	KALE
	10:00 AM	Gentle Yoga	BRENDA
	12:30 PM	Yoga Clinic Level 2: Analyze your Asana! Flexible Spine this week!	CHRISTINA
8/20 TUESDAY	7:00 AM	Morning Flow Yoga	MEGHAN
	8:30 AM	Yin / Yang Yoga	CHRISTINA
	9:00 AM	Yoga for Healing (Meditation)	PERCEC
	11:00 AM	Stress with a Difference	KALE
8/21 WEDNESDAY	7:30 AM	Hump Day Core	LANE
	9:30 AM	Chakra Yoga	CHRISTINA
	5:00 PM	Ply Girls! Aerial yoga for girls ages 7-15 (Meditation)	MEGHAN
8/22 THURSDAY	7:00 AM	Morning Flow Yoga	KAREN
	9:30 AM	All Levels Aerial / Post Fusion	CHRISTINA
	6:30 PM	All Levels Aerial Yoga	KALE
8/23 FRIDAY	7:45 AM	JAVA Bootcamp (JAYAFIT)	CHRISTINA
	9:30 AM	All Levels Yoga with Crystal Singing Bowls	CHRISTINA

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Visual Appeal: Many businesses occupied buildings that were visually attractive and well-maintained. Businesses had landscaping that improved the visual appeal of their business while also making the village a more attractive place. Comments included:

- Many of the shops and businesses create a historic appeal and make Moultonborough seem like a quintessential New England small town.
- The bank properties complement each other and add to the visual appeal of the village with their well-maintained buildings and landscaping.
- There are nicely repurposed buildings with attention being paid to well-planned updates.
- The plaza was well-done, has character, and contains attractive local businesses.
- Retail building has nice shops and a well-kept premises. The front porch with rocking chairs is welcoming and the façade is attractive.

Businesses

Opportunities

Vacant Spaces and Lots: The visiting team thought there was an opportunity for new and attractive businesses to move into the vacant buildings and empty lots in the village area. There was a focus on how the vacant public and non-profit owned buildings could be better leveraged. Comments included:

- There is a lot of opportunity with French Taylor House. I wonder if the town could identify a business to do a lease to own and have the town pay for improvements. Community space with leased café and office space could be a good fit for the village.
- The French Taylor House could be such a good place for a restaurant. It would be central to the town and bring so many of these cars to stop and spend time in Moultonborough.
- The building next to the county store looks underutilized. This would be a great spot for some retail and to really build out the village's shops in this area.
- The French Taylor House looks like a good opportunity or chance for the town to add a gateway for the downtown and would be a great spot for a local businesses.
- The old grange hall is such a great space to leverage. Maybe a local musical hall upstairs and local shops on the first floor.
- This is such a nice lot. The town could work with the bank to put seating and landscaping here.



Business Diversity and Hours: The visiting team thought Moultonborough had great local shops but there need to be more attractions to serve both residents and visitors in the village area. The village was missing restaurants, retail, and a bar or pub where people could spend time. Additionally, they commented on the limited weekday hours and early closing times of many popular businesses. Comments included:

- The opening hours for many of the village stores are pretty limited. Many shops are only open Friday and weekend and close early in the day.
- The village could use more businesses to make it more of a stopping place. Like an ice cream shop, restaurant, and local retail.
- I was expecting more activity and infrastructure before I visited Moultonborough.

Community Art



The assessment team did not make significant comments on the state of community art in Moultonborough. In conversations with Moultonborough and Derry community members, this was seen as an opportunity. Moultonborough currently has no murals, a limited number of flags, and no music or art space in the village area that brings residents together and improves the visual appeal. The Moultonborough Steering Committee discussed how a centrally located mural in downtown Derry created a welcoming and attractive place to spend time. Derry's mural was created by the community and funded through local businesses support.

Moultonborough visitors saw opportunity for community art and music in a few key locations in Moultonborough Village. One commented that the Grange Hall looked like it would be a great space to create a local music hall. Another assessor thought that the area behind the Safety Center could be better leveraged as a community gathering spot, bandstand, and a place for music.



Displays & Signage



Assets

Business Signage: Assessors commented on many of the creative and engaging signage that local businesses have.

- Business signage looking down the village area is easily visible, displayed tastefully, and not overwhelming.
- Many businesses have attractive, colorful, and historic signage. However, some is too small to read when driving through the village.
- The interactive sheet in Cup & Crumb is a really great way to get residents and visitors to highlight the assets of the town inside a local café.



Opportunities

Public Signage: Assessors thought public signage in Moultonborough Village was pretty limited. More signage was needed to draw attention to local parks, businesses, and other attractions. Comments included:

- Signage is not very prominent, covered by landscaping, small lettering, and easy to miss.
- Signage and entrance to Sutherland Park could be improved so that it's more welcoming as a place for people to stop and spend time.

Billboards and Large Signs: There was general agreement that large business signs don't align with a rural and attractive brand that Moultonborough Village should be striving for. Comments included:

- The billboard takes away from the rural character. The town should take it over with information on Moultonborough and what is happening.
- Large signs block beautiful views and take away from creating an attractive village.



Downtown Entrances



Moultonborough Village assessors provided a number of comments on what they saw as opportunities to create and improve the village's downtown entrance. In general, they didn't see signage or a clearly identified start to the village area. They were unsure where Moultonborough considers their defined village area.

Assessors commented that a more defined village area and signage could improve safety by slowing cars down, increase visitation to the village by letting drivers know that it's a welcome place to stop, and help in developing a brand for the village area. Comments from assessors include:

- It's unclear where Moultonborough considers the beginning of their downtown. Having a sign would slow cars down and encourage them to stop and spend time in the village and draw attention to some of the local shops and amenities.
- Moultonborough should leverage the incredible views that drivers get of Berry Pond, the mountains, and some of the historic buildings as they enter Moultonborough Village. Currently, overgrown plants and trees block the views of the mountains. Making those views more prominent may slow down traffic.
- The flags near the school are welcoming for an entrance to downtown but that area could use a sign.



Landscaping



Moultonborough assessors saw landscaping as one of the village's strongest assets. Visitors commented on the appeal of landscaping at both public and private buildings in the village area. Additionally, visitors commented on the "adopt a spot" program, which they thought created appealing landscaping in key spots in the village area. The one opportunity identified by visitors was to better leverage the attractive landscaping and parks spread throughout the village by installing seating, picnic tables, and trash bins so that both visitors and residents will spend more time there.

Public Buildings and Parks: Public buildings like the library, Safety Center, and Sutherland Park are well-maintained and have flowers, trees, and other attractive landscaping.

- Nice landscaping outside of the public safety complex. The hill behind the complex could be better leveraged with additional landscaping to create a gathering spot and serve residents and visitors.
- Beautiful landscaping at the Sutherland Memorial Park with trees, flowers, and picnic tables.
- Beautiful, small landscaped plot. Showcases community involvement on a busy thoroughfare.



Private Buildings and Lots: Local businesses had attractive and well-maintained landscaping that created a positive and welcoming environment for the rest of the village area.

- There's nice landscaping spread throughout town that's sponsored by residents and local businesses.
- The local banks have clean and well-maintained landscaping in front of their buildings.
- The planters in front of the gas station help to beautify the frontage.
- The plaza has really pretty landscaping, flowers, and stone and rockwork that improves those businesses and that area.



Lighting



The assessment team reviewed Moultonborough Village during the day so didn't have significant reviews on lighting. There were a few comments on the attractive lighting fixtures at private businesses, with a focus on the Berry Pond Plaza area.

A few common opportunities identified by visitors to Moultonborough were to improve safety, create more of a defined village area, slow cars down that are driving through the village, and create a more welcoming atmosphere. Lighting in the village area plays a role in improving each of these themes. Lighting increases safety and visitation by making both pedestrians and local businesses more visible at night. Lighting also creates a more welcoming and defined village area and lets visitors and residents know that it's a place to stop, spend time, and visit local businesses and attractions.

There's an opportunity for Moultonborough to focus on a common lighting fixture theme in public areas and at local businesses that supports the village's historic appeal. The village should focus on well-thought lighting that supports a historic and attractive building. Ground lighting that illuminates businesses and signage will make visitors aware of local attractions and encourage them to stop at night, extending the hours of the village area.



Parks and Natural Features



Assets

Access to Mountains and Lakes: The assessment team to Moultonborough commented on the village's ideal location with access to Lake Winnepesaukee and other smaller lakes and ponds as well the village's location close to the White Mountains and hiking. Visitors were able to see the mountains and lakes driving into Moultonborough Village and at key points throughout the village area. Comments included:

- The landscaping and natural beauty is really amazing at so many points in Moultonborough Village.
- What an incredible view of the pond and the mountains in the distance.
- Beautiful natural location with water and mountain views.



Diversity of Parks and Green Space: There are parks and green space spread throughout Moultonborough Village. From Sutherland Park and Berry Pond, green space around the library and town hall, open space next to the French-Taylor House, and space around the local banks. This provides numerous attractive and usable areas for residents and visitors to spend time.

- Berry Pond and Sutherland Park are a gem.
- The area around the town hall and library has great landscaping, seating, and open space.



Opportunities

Leveraging Berry Pond: Reviewers thought that Berry Pond is an incredible asset that is being underutilized by Moultonborough and the village. Visitors commented on the incredible view of the mountains from Berry Pond and saw opportunity to connect it to the rest of the village and promote it as an asset and draw for the community. Comments included:

- What an incredible view of the pond and the mountains in the distance. There should be some trails around the pond and more space to gather.
- Beautiful view of Berry Pond in the park. I had no idea that we would find this beautiful amenity here. I thought the park was just the grassy picnic area.
- Berry Pond and Sutherland Park could be made accessible from the public buildings. Combined with the open area the park could be made into a central gathering for community activities.
- Berry Pond is beautiful, with potential for recreation like fishing, boating, and swimming. It's unclear if it's public or private and what the rules are for using the boat ramp.



Improving Signage and Infrastructure: Reviewers thought that Moultonborough Village had a number of nice parks and open spaces, such as Sutherland Park, but that they weren't effectively signed and lacked necessary infrastructure to make them attractive places to spend time.

- The dock at Berry Pond is broken but beautiful. It could be a really good boat launch for people to put their kayaks and canoes in and fish off.
- There needs to be more signage to direct people to both Sutherland Park and Berry Pond.
- Would love to see the hill behind the Public Safety Complex improved. It could be a dog park or place for concerts, music, and events.
- The small pond behind Harvest Church could be a great asset with better access, infrastructure, and maintenance.
- It'd be nice to put some picnic tables and benches next to the French-Taylor House. It's a good community space that could be used for events and gatherings or maybe a farmers market.
- There should be some trails around the pond and the boardwalks should be extended to make it more of an attraction.

Points of Interest



Assets

History and Historical Society: Reviewers commented on the numerous historic buildings and landmarks, as well as the Historical Society. The buildings create a historic brand for the village that also has access to the lakes and the mountains. Comments included:

- The historical society building is very inviting. One opportunity is that I'm unsure of the hours.
- Even the main highway is named after John G Whittier, a famous Quaker Poet. These kinds of historic points of interest are beneficial to promote for the town and village.
- The historic well under the gazebo is really interesting. Some interpretive signage to draw attention to it would be helpful.



Opportunities

Leveraging Historic Buildings: Reviewers comments on the number of historic buildings that could be renovated and leveraged as attractions and destinations for Moultonborough Village. Comments included:

- Nearby historic buildings. These are an excellent restoration opportunity.
- The town retains its colonial roots with its architecture. The challenge is with some of the maintenance of the older buildings.
- The Methodist church is a nice landmark and well-kept.
- The country store is the reason that I would return to town.
- I'd love to see the historic buildings saved. They could make great attractions as offices, restaurant, music and performance space, art gallery, or so many other opportunities.





Assets

Centrally Located Public Buildings: Reviewers enjoyed the centrally located public building complex that includes the library, town hall, community center, and safety complex. They found all of the buildings to be attractive, well-maintained, and great services to the public. Comments included:

- All of the municipal facilities located in one spot with plenty of parking and easy access.
- The downtown library is quaint.
- Love the co-location of the community center, town hall, and library with lots of parking and access.
- Library, town hall, recreation/community center, and public safety building are all centrally located and walkable.
- Multi-use public facility area, lots of public parking, great library.
- The Public Safety building is visible, well-kept, accessible, and fits in with the surrounding area.



Opportunities

Connecting Public Facility Complex: The reviewers thought there was an opportunity to connect the public buildings to each other, to Sutherland Park and Berry Pond, build additional trails, develop a park, and better utilize the hill behind the public safety building as a community gathering spot. Comments included:

- The public facilities area could use additional public facilities like a park and connection to the pond.
- Love the co-location of the community center, town hall, and library but wish there were sidewalks on this stretch of the highway to connect to surrounding businesses.
- Multi-use public facility area, lots of public parking, and great library but could use additional facilities like a park and connection to Berry Pond.
- Greenspace between town hall and public safety building is underutilized. It could be a park, walking paths, and a great space for town events and gatherings.





Assets & Opportunities

Reviewers thought that in places where seating is located in Moultonborough Village it was well-placed and attractive. They enjoyed the seating around the library, in front of Cup & Crumb, at Sutherland Park, and on the front porch of the village's local retail shop.

Reviewers saw an opportunity to add additional seating in key places around the village to make them more attractive and welcoming places. Seating in the smaller green spaces and parks, like the area next to the French-Taylor House, would provide areas to congregate in the village beyond the focus on the public complex. Thinking of where to put additional seating will play into a larger strategy to make Moultonborough Village more of a welcoming destination and connect existing assets.



Sidewalks, Crosswalks, & Trails



Reviewers saw the most opportunity for Moultonborough Village to focus on improving pedestrian safety. The two overarching themes were improving pedestrian safety and connecting businesses and attractions. Reviewers understood there are significant barriers to building sidewalks and crosswalks in Moultonborough Village. However, they commented on how they felt unsafe walking along the road, weren't sure where or how to cross the road to access other shops or businesses, and thought it was difficult to access other parts of the village outside of the public complex and country store.

Crosswalks: Reviewers thought the two main areas that needed crosswalks were from the Cup & Crumb plaza and Sutherland Park to cross the street from The Old Country Store. Comments included:

- The main access point from the municipality and The Old Country Store to the local restaurant has a high volume of traffic and no crosswalk or light of any kind. This area is difficult to navigate on foot.
- A crosswalk at The Old Country Store would connect the two sides of town and the businesses.
- The only crosswalk in town goes to Dollar General and the store. Wish there were more, especially in the central part of the village.



Sidewalks: Reviewers felt there was an opportunity for a sidewalk or trail to connect the municipal complex to Sutherland Park and to connect The Old Country Store to the retail shops and banks.

- I wish there was a sidewalk or in-town trail system to feel safe along the main road. I certainly do not feel safe crossing the road.
- There are no sidewalks to get from business to business.
- No sidewalks make it dangerous to walk. I'm not feeling too safe.
- Make the road shoulder a bike lane. Leverage tourist businesses and destination traffic from surrounding communities.
- There is no easy way to walk between businesses and the entire village provides no means of pedestrian crossing.

Streets & Transportation



The assessment team saw streets and transportation as both an asset and an opportunity for Moultonborough Village.

Asset

The main road through Moultonborough Village is heavily trafficked with both residents and visitors. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation traffic count found that in 2017, 11,534 vehicles passed through Moultonborough Village each day. This traffic can be leveraged for new businesses and attractions in vacant buildings and spaces, and to make Moultonborough Village a destination for both residents and visitors.

Opportunities

Traffic Management and Safety: The common theme for reviewers was that they didn't feel safe in Moultonborough Village. One reviewer commented that Moultonborough Village "needs pedestrian safety considerations." There was a lot of traffic moving through the village, it was loud, and the traffic moved fast. If the town is able to design signage and other traffic calming measures that slow down traffic and increase driver awareness for pedestrians, the number of cars traveling through the village is a significant opportunity.

Increasing Visitor Stops: Many on the assessment team drove through Moultonborough and didn't realize there was a village center or local businesses and attractions where they could stop. One assessor commented, please give us clear parking signs and direction. I'm more likely to stop and do business if I know how easily accessible the village is.



Waste & Recycling



The visiting team did not assess waste & recycling points in Moultonborough Village. This is likely because the village area doesn't have many waste or recycling baskets. The assessment team did find that the village area and local parks were clean and well kept, so the limited number of waste and recycling barrels wasn't negatively impacting village cleanliness. However, similar to having benches and picnic tables, waste & recycling does signal to residents and visitors that an area is welcoming to visitors and residents.



After the Visit

Post-Visit Survey

The visiting team completed a Post-Visit Survey following the assessment in Moultonborough. This survey gave the team the chance to reflect on the visit and give the downtown an overall rating. Additional questions asked the visitors to comment on their interest in returning to Moultonborough, recommendations to friends, and whether or not they would live there. The responses to the survey follow:

Five-Minute Impression

The initial impression can greatly influence visitors' overarching opinions of a location. Below are the five-minute observations of the team:

- An attractive Lakes Region town. The “downtown” is not particularly well defined.
- Very small but well manicured. Lots of flowers that were alive and vibrant.
- Cute, manicured, quiet. I thought it was rural and charming and had some real potential to add some pedestrian-friendly features and be a quick stop for lake tourists.
- Nice quaint downtown in need of sidewalks and street lights. The downtown is short but the The Old Country Store breathes life into it.
- As it is, the town is a pass through to other destinations in the region. However, with a few relatively minor adjustments, the charm and the community amenities could be enjoyed by the visitors to the area and enhance the quality of life in the town.
- The community has terrific municipal facilities but the downtown is very difficult to walk safely. There are not enough stores or places to eat and there are empty buildings which could be turned around to create more of a retail vibe.
- There was a nice mix between historic and new (Cup & Crumb) buildings along the route. The fact that you could see the lake and mountains from the main road was a nice plus. The traffic on the main road moves too fast through that area, so it was a bit hard to take notice of signage while traveling through.
- The landscaping was very nice. It was a cute town and quite clean. The mountains in the background gave it all a very rustic and calm feeling, despite having a (what felt like a) highway through the center of town.

Moultonborough's Brand

Derry visitors were asked whether they thought Moultonborough's town center had an identifiable slogan or brand. All nine survey respondents said they didn't believe that Moultonborough had a slogan or brand for its town center, or couldn't recall if one did exist.

Town Center Attractions

Visitors were asked what local restaurant, specialty shop, or attraction would bring them back to visit Moultonborough's town center in the future. Below are the responses.

- Absolutely The Old Country Store.
- The Old Country Store and Cup & Crumb were great!
- The Mexican restaurant was great and The Old Country Store is enough for me to go back.
- The coffee shop was really nice. I might stop by if I was traveling through but would be unlikely to return just for that shop.
- The really good Mexican restaurant, El Mariachi.
- The Old Country Store is a landmark.
- Cup & Crumb, The Old Country Store, and the small park located next to the Safety Center.
- The Old Country Store in the center of town was a lot of fun. We walked through the entire store so I'm not sure I would necessarily return to it as a destination, but would certainly stop if I was driving through town.
- I would return to the town center if it had a diner or general American fare. Also, salads and sandwiches, something a little healthier and trendier to appeal to a larger more current demographic. Expand the little pocket park across from Cup & Crumb.



Living, Working & Visiting Moultonborough

The Post-Visit survey asked team members to consider whether or not they would consider living, opening a business, or visiting Moultonborough.

Would you consider living in Moultonborough?

Yes

- It is an attractive, clean, and well-maintained downtown.
- Because it's peaceful yet has life to it. It's a beautiful location.
- I would if there were sidewalks and I could walk or bike to the area.

No

- Not a whole lot nearby. Definitely a town to drive through and explore.
- I didn't see lots of living spaces.
- That main road was very very busy with huge logging trucks and no lights/crosswalks.
- For me, it would be a great place to visit.
- It's too far from where I want to be, but it's a cute town.

Would you consider opening a business in Moultonborough?

Yes

- I think a small business such as an ice cream shop, local crafts, local art, more restaurants, etc. would be a perfect addition to a downtown that needs a little more life.
- I would consider a craft eatery if pedestrian safety issues were addressed.

No

- As it stands today, there does not appear to be sufficient weekday foot traffic or population to support new businesses. This is backed up by the downtown retail location that is only open Friday thru Sunday.
- It's not pedestrian friendly enough.
- It's too far removed from a city.
- There does not seem to be enough population or visitors to support a business.
- I'm not interested in living up north.
- Depending on seasonal uses, it may be difficult to maintain a profitable business.
- I don't think so. Hear that the population is 4,000 people, that's not a lot of foot traffic. If I had a tourist destination type of business with low rent and I lived up there, maybe. But I also see there are a lot of opportunities for a business up there since there are so few retail choices.

Would you consider visiting downtown Moultonborough with family or friends?

Yes

- The Old Country Store is definitely a unique destination spot.
- The Old Country Store is definitely something everyone should experience. Very cool. I would go back if I was in the area.
- I'd go back to the coffee shop and The Old Country Store if I was already in the area.
- I would return because of its location near the lakes and the mountains.
- I would visit, but plan my visit with other destinations on the itinerary.
- I would stop at a few places but wouldn't walk around.
- If I happened to be driving through, I would stop at the Country Store again. I don't think there is enough to do to become a destination for me, based what I saw.

No

- There is simply not enough to see or do.

Living, Working & Visiting Moultonborough

Was there anything missing from Moultonborough's town center?

- There wasn't enough retail and eating establishments.
- Sidewalks, more businesses, and more attractions.
- Crosswalks and sidewalks. Places to sit like benches. An ice cream parlor with outdoor tables and seating. Expanding the park and path.
- Sidewalks and street lamps.
- Places to eat or shop and safe walking areas.
- Pedestrian and cycling lanes and more food options would bring even more business.
- Signage, identified parking, crosswalks, and more retail.
- Sidewalks and bike lanes, signs for available parking along the main road, safe places to cross the road, more boutique type businesses that were "open."
- More restaurant choices. I don't remember seeing a grocery store but I know there is one close by. We didn't see a lot of things but I remember a library, the police/fire station, yoga, coffee shop, pizza/sub shop, country store, gas station, and banks.

Change in perception

The visitors to Moultonborough were asked if the perception that they had of Moultonborough's town center prior to the visit was accurate. Nearly all of the respondents said their perception was not accurate for the following reasons.

- I expected more of a bustling area.
- It's prettier than I imagined.
- There was more care put into the little town than I anticipated. But at the same time, there was less infrastructure than I expected.
- I was expecting more downtown in the way of shops, mills, and more unique stores that monetized on the Lakes Region theme.
- I thought there would be more to offer than only The Old Country Store.
- I was expecting it to be more walkable, because I was thinking of it as a seasonal destination spot.
- It was smaller than I imagined it to be.

Outstanding Feature

The survey asked visitors what they thought the most outstanding feature of Moultonborough's town center was.

- The Old Country Store.
- The Old Country Store, coffee shop, and flowers.
- Well-thought town offices and placement. The Old Country Store was great.
- The Old Country Store.
- The landscaping was beautiful and everything was clean and well-kept on the street and outside areas.
- The Fire Station and Safety Complex.
- The building where the coffee shop is located is very well done. The park was great and the municipal buildings and library were attractive. The landscaping was good, there was no litter, and the area was very clean.
- The Old Country Store. It had literally everything. Loved it.
- The Old Country Store.

Top Assets

The visiting team was asked to list the top three assets visitors observed in Moultonborough, here are the assets they identified:

- The Old Country Store
- Sutherland Park
- Berry Pond
- Clean and well-maintained
- Landscaping
- Quaint New England vibe
- Coffee shop
- Central location of community center and library
- Historic buildings

Opportunities for Improvement

The visiting team was asked to identify opportunities for improvement in Moultonborough, here are the opportunities they identified:

- Better signage for Sutherland Park
- Better signage for Berry Pond
- Sidewalks
- Pedestrian and safety signage
- Open up Berry Pond waterfront
- Trash cans
- Street lights
- Downtown signage and directions
- More retail and restaurant options
- Expand weekday business hours

Lessons Learned for Moultonborough Committee Members

Following their visit to Derry, Moultonborough Steering Committee members were asked what they learned and what opportunities they saw for their own downtown. Here are some of their comments:

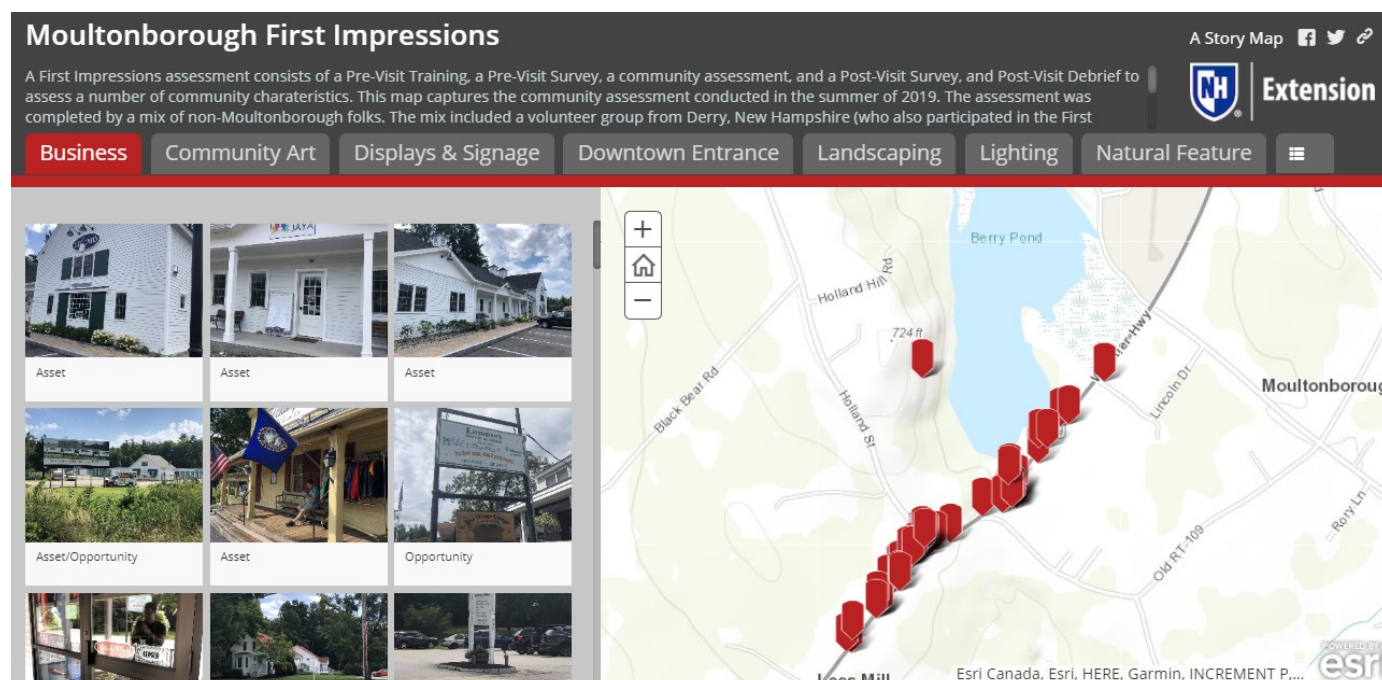
- Moultonborough Village is very green, with building spread out. We don't have many housing options and limited mixed use buildings in the village area. After the businesses and public facilities close, there is limited life in the village area.
- With the village located on a major road, promoting landmarks could create traffic. Flags, welcome signs, and promotion materials could pull the area together.
- Moultonborough Village doesn't seem as welcoming after visiting Derry.
- We need to change Moultonborough Village from a pass-through zone and give people a reason to stop. Eating establishments would encourage visitation and serve local residents.
- Being a vacation and resort town it's difficult to support businesses. With a higher median age we also don't have the workforce to support businesses.
- Leverage the historic community buildings as part of the village's brand.

Moultonborough Steering Committee members were then asked if the experience gave them any new ideas for projects in their own community. Following are some of their answers.

- We don't have a lot of local dining establishments in Moultonborough Village. A lunch or dinner option located in one of the historic buildings would be a terrific addition and draw people into the downtown area.
- We need clearly defined pedestrian routes along the main road and connecting to businesses and public buildings. We also need to develop the trail network around Berry Pond and to our natural features.
- We need to improve our signage to the town, and leverage our location close to the ski areas to expand the attraction to new seasons.
- We need a welcome sign, park benches, and lighting.
- Derry had an outdoor skating rink that was used year round. Moultonborough could design a similar rink for use by local residents with some funding from the town and working with local contractors.
- The visit to Derry reinforced the need for trails to walk on and ride a bike and the need for an additional access road behind the main road to access existing infrastructure.
- We need to develop and improve signage, work on our trails, and fill our vacant business buildings.
- Art can help unite our community. There are examples in Meredith and in other areas outside of NH.

First Impressions: Moultonborough Assessment Map

The assessment data is stored on an online interactive map. To view that data, visit: bit.ly/moultonboroughvillage



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